

Community Service News

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New Light on the Possibilities of Community—

For those concerned with the community the choice has seemed to be between metropolitan cities, big government, and big business on the one hand, and on the other the individual small, human-size community fighting for its life and its ancient values. Modern urban life has some sound advantages which people crave. If to preserve the human-size community those values must be lost, then the small community is in danger of losing out. Thoughtful people ask themselves whether such an exclusive choice is necessary. Must it be this *or* that? Does not the prevailing view reflect a lack of creative imagination in social philosophy?

While no sudden complete solution of this dilemma is probable, light is breaking from several directions. These hints of a larger, more inclusive pattern bring reason to hope that the elements of good living in urban and in human-size community life are not mutually exclusive. It has been our limited vision, and not the inherent possibilities, that are restricting.

In this issue of *Community Service News* are two significant hints of a larger and more adequate philosophy of community—one which would not lose essential community values, and yet has place for the fundamental contributions of urban life. The article by Lewis Mumford, while it deals chiefly with environment and organization, rather than with the spirit which causes a community to be a living organism, suggests far-reaching possibilities. The review of Claire Bishop's book, *All Things Common*, reports a revolutionary social invention which is now a fact in many localities in France. Here the modern industrial, commercial or agricultural plant becomes the focus of a new kind of community.

Also in This Issue—

In "How Five Dollars Started a Revolution," Fred Kelly tells how a decentralizing change in the purchasing, and consequently the packing, of livestock has grown in the Middle West. The article "Small Business in Japan" discloses the extent to which a large part of industry has been successfully decentralized in a modern industrial nation.

Startling assertions have been made of a great increase in birth rates that may enable the large city to reproduce itself. Arthur Morgan and Warren Thompson in the article "Has There Been a Population Revolution?" bring illuminating considerations to bear upon this "vital" question.

The problem of how professional community organization services can help the community without imposing upon it and destroying its autonomy and initiative is a perennial problem. Max Wolff, whose views are discussed in "How Shall the Community Be Served?" gives a statement of the problem. We welcome further comment.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND THE SMALL TOWN

By LEWIS MUMFORD

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For the last generation, city planners and urban sociologists have assumed, without even feeling under the necessity to prove anything so obvious, that the great metropolis, with its concentrated millions of inhabitants, is the final term in urban development. Economists, likewise, have been bold enough to treat the metropolitan economy as if it were the final form of economic organization. . . . By now, many people take for granted that metropolitan concentration will go on throughout the world, accelerated by the forces that have been working so steadily, apparently so inexorably. . . . There has been plenty of statistical evidence to support this view; and most of that evidence still holds. In the United States, for example, half the urban population lives in metropolitan areas; areas, that is, where a million people or upward are massed together. . . .

But the fact is that the metropolitan regime is a self-limiting one: and the forces that have been mainly responsible for the growth of big cities since the sixteenth century, forces that antedated the invention of adequate means of rapid transportation, have within our own generation rapidly come to an end. The metropolitan economy was an economy based on the colonization of distant lands, upon the exploitation of the primitive areas that supplied raw materials, upon the possibility of living parasitically upon the underpaid labor of an overseas proletariat supplemented by a surplus of underpaid immigrants or other displaced persons at home.

All these conditions have been disappearing during the last generation. . . . Both the conditions and the motives that gave rise to metropolitan concentration no longer exist in their original form; what is more, every country, not least the United States, has attempted to achieve internal stabilization and security; and the concept of the common welfare, what the British call Fair Shares for All, has replaced power and profit as the guiding principle of all statesmanship worthy of the name.

From almost every angle, this prospective transformation is a fortunate one. There is no doubt whatever that the metropolitan economy, in its heyday, provided the maximum opportunities for pecuniary exploitation, and for all those forms of social intercourse and delight which depended upon the ostentatious display of wealth. . . . Every little town, under the hypnosis of metropolitan success, felt under the obligation of creating tall office buildings and crowded hotels in the litter of its central area, when it might, with

all the space it could command, have produced efficient and handsome low buildings, set in the midst of quiet gardens. The small town clung to the common obsession of this civilization, that bigness is the hallmark of success, and quantity has a qualitative value.

But the success of the metropolis, when one looked behind its imposing façade, turned out to be less substantial than its claims. . . . Thirty years ago it took, perhaps, a little youthful brashness, as well as prophetic vision, to say that this metropolitan regime was destined to fall by its own weight; but today that fact should be obvious to everyone who even dimly discerns the signs of the times.

I say all this without reference to another kind of disintegration that threatens the metropolis: a danger and a disintegration well known to the inhabitants of Warsaw and Rotterdam, of London and Berlin, and Tokyo, to say nothing of Hiroshima. For in addition to all the other disabilities that the metropolitan regime has brought with it, it has also brought about a devaluation of ethical principles and a contempt for life; and should another war break out between the major powers, this time it would be collective genocide, unrestrained and undirected violence, on a scale hitherto unimaginable, and the big city would be the most attractive target for total extermination. But all this would only anticipate, by destructive means, a process that is already under way for entirely beneficent purposes; in terms of human needs and human potentialities, the metropolis is unlivable; and even without the threat of atomic genocide, the day of the congested metropolis is over. . . .

Both necessity and choice are leading us in another direction. If we are capable of saving ourselves from the catastrophes that now threaten us through the perversion of the powers we now command, it will be because, in every department of life, we have the insight to set our course in the direction of a balanced civilization, in the direction of a balanced life, marked by cooperation and purposeful interdependence, rather than by domination and exploitation; it will be because we realize that the days of the soloists and prima donnas, whether among groups or among nations or among cities, is over. . . . We are approaching, in other words, a new economy that will supplant the metropolitan economy. In this new economy any overgrowth in urban centers, like any overconcentration of wealth and power, will be regarded as a serious disorder, like the excessive functioning of the pituitary gland in the human body. The post-metropolitan economy will be one in which the advantages of concentration will be achieved by organization and plan, not by a mere massing together of population within a limited area; and in which the small community, kept close to the human

scale, but subserving a wider range of human needs than any existing small town, will be the normal form of the city. This does not involve a step backward into the primitive and the undeveloped: it rather involves a step forward to a higher kind of organization, more advanced even in its technical facilities, and certainly far more economical, than the metropolitan economy. This is a step forward comparable to that which took place when the era of the giant armored reptiles gave way to the era of the small mammals, possessed of a nervous system which gave the little creatures that culminated in man more adaptability, keener foresight, finer sensitivity, and a greater range of reactions generally than the monstrous creatures who preceded them ever achieved.

Regional planning is not a method for prescribing to small towns a more effective way of becoming big than the older centers followed; nor is it a method of preparing the small town to accept and hasten its ultimate fate of being devoured and absorbed by the continued expansion of the neighboring metropolis. The kind of regional planning that concerns the small town is that which is devoted to giving to the region as a whole, and the small town as an integral unit in the region, the advantages that were hitherto monopolized by the big city, whilst safeguarding and developing the rural and primeval elements in the region. . . . Only under a regime that seeks to establish a balance between industry and agriculture and that keeps the open country close at hand, can the increasing leisure that industry now promises provide opportunities for active recreational opportunities throughout the year.

We must, accordingly, face the problem of regional planning for the small town with a radically different set of assumptions from those that govern the metropolitan economy. . . .

The first assumption, as regards urban development, is that though cities are organizations, not organisms, they have an organic limit to their growth, and that they become disorganized, inefficient, socially inoperative if they overpass the norm of their development. . . . Even in new housing developments, such as Stuyvesant Town in New York, we create masses of undifferentiated urban tissue, from five to ten times the size of an organic neighborhood unit, without a school or a church or a meeting-hall or a library within the area; and without playgrounds and open spaces on a scale commensurate with a population density of over 400 people per acre. In the new conception of the city, on the other hand, the city is a group of cellular units; each cell is limited in size and density, and at the center of each cell are social institutions, also limited in size. When the social cell has achieved its optimum growth, a new cell must be started, with a nucleus of its own.

This notion of organic growth, socially controlled and limited, stands in opposition to the metropolitan premise of indefinite expansion. This, a fundamental theorem, was first put forward with great clarity in Ebenezer Howard's "Garden Cities of Tomorrow," over half a century ago. Though Howard stressed the organic nature of the city as a whole, and thought, like Leonardo da Vinci before him, that 30,000 people would be able to provide for every important urban function, industrial, political, social; we know now that Howard's concept has an even wider application: that the principle of limited growth applies to the neighborhood, and even to the smallest unit of planning, the group of families, just as it applies to the larger unit, the region. The basic reason for controlling the growth of the big city and for favoring the small town, as Howard saw it, is not merely the inefficiency and disorder of the great metropolis that had passed, in all its functions, beyond the human scale; the basic reason is that only in the small town can a balance be effected between the urban and the rural elements in life. Howard's conscious purpose was to marry town and country; and he saw that the way to make this marriage effective was to limit the area and population of a town, and to surround it with a permanent green belt, dedicated to agriculture and open recreational spaces. Without conscious effort and deliberate political control, that balance cannot be maintained; and there is little use in considering regional planning for the small town unless we understand that the advantages that the small town potentially possesses, even when it is still relatively unplanned, will disappear unless we take deliberate steps, such as were taken as long ago as 1932 in England, to provide the town with a means of safeguarding two of its most precious qualities: its human scale, and its closeness to nature.

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Regional planning, therefore, insofar as it concerns itself with the small town, must address itself to the task of maintaining and multiplying small towns, not in furthering their indefinite growth. The small town of the future, once regional ideals and goals supplant metropolitan ideals, will have the following characteristics. First: it will be limited in area, limited in population, and limited in density. In areas where clusters of small towns may be developed, the normal size of the small town will be between twenty thousand and fifty thousand people: in other areas, where because of topographical difficulties, perhaps, such clusters may be hard to achieve, as in the heavily dissected plateau of the Allegheny Valley, the small town might reach sixty, eighty, or in exceptional cases, perhaps a hundred thousand inhabitants: these would be normal variations, like the variations in height between human beings, variations which do not imply either dwarfism or giantism. Each town will be surrounded by a permanent greenbelt, either

established by a state zoning law, or owned by the city; and since high land values are the main cause of deficient open spaces in the city, the smallness of the town and its restricted density—never more than a hundred persons per acre in the densest quarter—should permit sufficient garden space to give every family, and even such bachelors as may wish it, enough garden space to raise flowers and a limited amount of succulent vegetables: such towns will have green cores within its superblocks, as well as greenbelts to define their outer limits. This pattern will both govern fresh growth and guide the internal reconstruction of the small town, as it seeks to develop its own qualities and resources.

Now the conditions we are laying down here, as essential for the small town cannot be achieved by any single small town. nor can they be achieved by allowing the forces that produce disorderly growth—land speculation, shortsighted, uncoordinated public planning—to prevail in the future as they have in the past. Social control over size, density, area, cannot be maintained by any single town, no matter what its size: all these goods can be achieved only through a regional framework of organization, and through a regional authority, which will be able to carry out a policy favoring the preservation of the small town through the building of new towns. The small town cannot survive by itself simply because it is not worthy to survive by itself: no small town, however peaceful and orderly and healthful, can afford by itself more than a modicum of our civilization. When a generation ago Sinclair Lewis showed that Main Street was dull, provincial and narrow, despite its many solid human virtues, he did not err in his estimate; in the old pattern of life the small town was necessarily an ingrown place, a place of narrow horizons: so that its active spirits either left it for the big city, or sought, by bustle and enterprise, to make it over into a bigger community. And accordingly, if we wish to limit the size of cities, we must not merely offer to the small town special advantages to make up for that limitation; we must also provide the kind of political organization which will even out advantages between otherwise competitive towns within the same general area, so that people will be as loyal to the region as a whole, as interested in its general welfare, as they are to their neighborhood or to their local community.

The need for finding a regional equivalent to metropolitan advantages has not, I think, been sufficiently stressed by those of us who have been establishing the case for urban decentralization. But when all is said for the rural, the primitive, the direct and the simple, most people in our culture still have what seems to me a healthy desire to participate in the intellectual and social advantages of a highly developed civilization; they do not seek simplicity and sanity and balance in any form of isolationism. Though we

now enjoy this civilization under severe handicaps in Paris and London, in New York and Chicago, there is no need to despise its real goods. So the great question for regional planning is how these advantages are to be achieved in terms of the city of limited size.

Ebenezer Howard knew that the big city, whose population he proposed to draw off into smaller, well-defined communities, has in fact one great advantage over the small town: namely, it brings together a greater number of people, and therefore larger range of talents, aptitudes, professions, within a common field for cooperation. Taking note of this fact, Howard suggested that ten garden cities, properly grouped and woven together into a close unity by a rapid transportation system, would have all the advantages of a city of 300,000 people, without the disabilities of congestion, of distance from the open country, of over-mechanization. If the growth of the small town must be limited, its limitations will be more acceptable if it becomes part of a regional constellation of cities, with a common regional government for its over-all activities, and with a capacity for mobilizing and distributing its cultural resources into each small town, instead of concentrating them, in a fixed, static, immobile pattern in a single dominating center.

We have yet to invent the form of political authority that will make this growth possible. But we have a precedent for it in America in the old New England township; for the township was often a relatively large area, sometimes ten miles wide and a dozen long, which united for the purposes of town government the inhabitants of its constituent hamlets and villages, as well as scattered farmers in the open country. Certain purely local functions, like that of operating the elementary school, were reserved for the smallest local unit, the school district, often just the dozen or twenty families that occupied a hamlet; while the common functions, like the building and upkeep of the highways, were performed by the township through its elected officers. Increase the scale of the area and communities, bring in the new social and technical services of our day, draw a clean line between local and regional functions, and give the Regional Authority powers similar to those that New York-New Jersey Port Authority now has—do this and we will have a renovated form of the New England township, an administrative organ capable of holding its own in competition with the overgrown metropolis. . . .

We need a regional authority with the power to float bonds and to make investments in new communities which our housing authorities now have; we need a regional authority with the power to zone for urban and rural uses, and where necessary to buy land for public uses of an undetermined nature; we need an authority that will be capable of planning new cities, in order to keep the new towns under its jurisdiction from passing, under con-

tinued population pressure, beyond the normal limits of their growth; we need a regional authority with the power to set aside primeval areas and to fix new industrial sites; so that recreation facilities and industrial opportunities will be planned with a view to the needs of the population as a whole. No single community, however enlightened—not even the biggest of metropolitan centers—can make such plans or carry them out.

Once the ideal of organic balance was effectively established in people's minds, as a constantly operating one, guiding all decisions of private and public policy, it would be possible, I think, to give to the smallest community within a region most of the positive benefits that the inhabitants of a great metropolis now profit by—but for the most part enjoy only in a feeble and limited way. Our problem is to create by organization and plan, which utilize to the full all the technical resources of the modern world, what the big city has produced so far only by congestion, a congestion accompanied by an inordinate amount of waste and futile expense and human wear and tear. But let us not fool ourselves: there *are* things that a million people can do, when they have achieved an appropriate mode of organization, that a few thousand people cannot, with the best will in the world, achieve. . . . What the advocate of the small city says, in answer to the metropolitan claim, is that it is not necessary to promote congestion and waste in order to have the advantages of cooperation: what we say is that, with the motor car, the telephone and the radio, a region with a radius of seventy-five miles, properly organized, can establish closer cooperation among its members, precisely because of the open pattern of settlement, than the big congested metropolis today, within whose confines an endless succession of frictions and stoppages and frustrations make a mockery of its boasted technical achievements. With a regional pooling of purpose, and with appropriate political powers, the small town will not merely come abreast of the metropolitan center: it will surpass it.

Now there are certain parts of this country where a particularly happy development of the small town would be possible. . . . If one state in the country is more outstanding than any other in providing a favorable occasion for regional planning on behalf of the small town, the balanced rural-urban community, it is North Carolina. For this is a state that does not boast a single city with much over a hundred thousand population: a state mainly of villages and small towns, with the towns themselves, by some happy accident, already grouped in clusters, like Winston-Salem-Greensboro-High Point, like Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill. If the forces of the past continue automatically to operate in North Carolina, these small towns will form, within a generation, dense metropolitan aggregates, as unfavorable to human development as the dingiest industrial districts of the North: the towns of

twenty thousand or fifty thousand population will merge into one another to form a single congested urban clot. . . .

But there is no inherent reason for repeating the sordid and wasteful pattern of the past. If the people of North Carolina appreciate the values of the small town, and if they realize that the advantage of metropolitan concentration can now be obtained by political organization, without congestion, they can halt the present tendency to urban expansion, by establishing permanent greenbelts around the existing centers, and by deliberately planting new industries and new plants in new centers, also designed for a limited population. . . .

We need a regional grid for culture, like the electric grid for power, capable of utilizing the entire system to supply a local demand which cannot be satisfied out of local resources. In England, since the early nineteen-thirties, the library authorities have created such a cultural grid: the borrower from a small town branch, who cannot find the book he wants in his local library, gets it through the regional library from any library in the region; and when the regional system does not contain it, he draws upon the national pool. In that way the resident of the smallest center has as many books at his command as if he lived in the heart of London. This principle is capable of the widest application, for it gives the small community the advantages of bigness without the penalties of congestion. . . . Without such planning, we cannot hope to give the small town the social and cultural advantages of the great metropolitan centers of the past. . . .

What I have been trying to paint for you is not a picture of a small community, dedicated wholly to conserving its traditional way of life, seeking to live solely by the use of its local resources, clinging desperately to the good old ways and the good old days, erecting barriers against new forces and new ideas, resisting the impact of new opportunities and new possibilities for industrial organization and social life. Quite the contrary. What I have sought to demonstrate is that a balanced community, limited in size and area, limited in density, in close contact with the open country, is actually the new urban form for our civilization; and that this new pattern can be achieved only by deliberate political organization, through regional authorities having larger scope in their planning than any existing municipality. In outlining this conception, I have deliberately broken with the idea that regional planning is merely a means of dealing in a coordinated manner with the natural background . . . it demands much more than that. The further purpose of regional planning is that of creating a balanced environment, with balanced communities, for people who are determined to lead an autonomous and balanced life, which will not merely recapture traditional values that have often fallen by the wayside but will more fully utilize the positive

advantages of an advanced civilization. Just as a town of limited size, surrounded by a wide greenbelt, is much more favorably disposed to the use of planes and helicopters than a big metropolis, where the landing-field is sometimes half an hour or more away from the center of the city, so such towns are more capable of making use of many other inventions and institutions peculiar to modern civilization, providing we learn to create by regional organization the facilities that the big metropolis brings out largely by planless, or almost planless, congestion. The age of the big city is over, though the monuments of its folly and arrogance may long remain in existence. . . . But if the small, biotechnic city is to come into its own, as the agent of a new civilization, it will have to learn the arts of regional planning, regional culture and regional design; and create a life more highly organized and more purposeful and far more widely cultivated than that of the out-moded metropolis.

WHAT IS THE HUMAN SCALE IN CITIES?

A LETTER TO LEWIS MUMFORD

Dear Mr. Mumford:

In your conception of the regional association of towns that are to be clustered in larger units you suggest that "the normal size of the small town will be between twenty thousand and fifty thousand people: in other areas sixty, eighty, or in exceptional conditions perhaps a hundred thousand inhabitants." What basis have you for considering that such cities are well within the range of the human scale?

The question we are posing is: What are the essential, enduring characteristics of human community life in recognition of which we must plan? In the January-February, 1950, *Community Service News* we reprinted Gordon Rattray Taylor's "The Nature of an Organic Society," in which Taylor examined with care the essential conditions of the "human scale" in community life. Significantly, some other sociologists have independently made similar studies and in each case the limit of community size was calculated to be not much more than ten thousand. Taylor suggests that a city ceases to have the human scale of an organic community when it has grown beyond the point at which the citizens can know about most others in it, at least indirectly or by reference to groups they are in—a kind of extension of the face-to-face principle. Whether large or small, the city is a dominating influence over its population. It is doubtful that it can be given the human scale merely by subdividing it into neighborhoods.

Sincerely,
GRISCOM MORGAN

TECHNOLOGY FINDS A SOUL

There is a general conviction prevalent in western Europe that the old economic and social order is passing, and that thinking people have repudiated communism as its sequel. There is an active search for a better way. The "communitarian" movement that developed in France during the last fifteen years is a notable contribution to that better way. If its development bears out present promise it may come to rank above the Rochdale cooperative movement in its historic importance to mankind.

In a study of this movement Claire Bishop has combined rare qualities of penetrating insight, a high order of literary craftsmanship, and excellent reporting. *All Things Common*[†] promises to bring to the American people the inspiration and will to make extensive use of the example of the French and Swiss "communities of work."*

"All Things Common" is a misleading title. The communities of work which it describes do not have all things common, but only their productive and community affairs. Private income from the community of work, private homes, and personal expenditure are personal. And the communities are strictly limited to the "human scale" in their affairs.

What is most significant about the French communities of work is that they have succeeded in taking modern industrial developments and machine production, which under private ownership had subordinated the worker and had tended to disintegrate the community, and have converted them into means for strengthening community brotherhood and pride in collective work. They have done this without losing the balance of private individual life, neighborhood fellowship, association with society at large, and association between people of profoundly different political and economic views. Mrs. Bishop quotes a priest, Abbé Poutrain, who led a mountain parish in discovery of the "communitarian way." "Modern industrial techniques have something to teach man . . . that his liberty and his plentitude cannot be based on outmoded individualism but on persons united communitarily."

[†]*All Things Common*, by Claire Huchet Bishop (New York, Harper and Bros., 274 pages, October 1950. \$3.00).

*The original of these communities, Boimondeau, started by Marcel Barbu, was described in the May-June, 1949, issue of *Community Service News*. Recent articles by Mrs. Bishop include "The Communities of Work" and "Revolution in the Valley," in *Commonweal*, January 20 and March 24; and "Community Living, a la Boimondau," in *Survey*, August 1949. Community Service will have copies of *All Things Common* available as soon as it is published.

This communitarian movement is not a small uncertain development of enthusiasts, but is widespread, profound and practical. Organized as the Entente Communautaire, it expresses the will of people of all classes and occupations to move beyond the old-time pattern of relationships of capitalist social and economic organization, which so often have been degrading to the motives or status of those involved, into one that practically liberates the energies of all to work together for common ends. It is most significant that the community ownership and operation of productive facilities for the end of better collective living has been initiated variously by unemployed, by farmers, by workmen, by professional people, by management, and sometimes by capitalists, but always with the craving for a better and more wholesome relationship with others. It is *life*, not a living, that is sought.

In America we are widely aware of industrial discontent among wage workers; we are learning that salaried technologists and professional people are often more deeply discontented than the manual and clerical worker, for they are selling not only their labor but their best creative energies for a fee. We have yet to awaken to the widespread discontent in the employers with the relationships within capitalist business and industry. The employer desires man-to-man fellowship with his workers. He sometimes feels that it is the union that has robbed him of this fellowship, but it is the relationship itself that tends to result in this unhappiness, for it occurs somewhat irrespective of the intelligence and good will of all parties, or of profit sharing and stock holding of workers in the business. The worker is on the other side of the fence from the management in a purely economic undertaking in which the object is largely limited to income and profits.

That is one of many reasons why small businessmen sell out to big business—because the zest is taken out of their work by an unwholesome relationship to workmen. Mrs. Bishop tells of case after case in which prosperous owners of businesses old or young, large or small, had been discontented with their own and capitalist society's best efforts to improve the lot and spirit of their workmen. Her quotations from these men who had turned communitarian are revealing of a discontent widely evident also in America.

A building contractor said. "My business was doing very well, but the workers were not really happy. It made no difference when I raised the wages all around. . . . [Communitarian ownership] is the only thing to do. It is the interest of the heads of firms to do it." A manufacturer of stoves had become convinced that there is "fundamental and irreducible antagonism between the interests of capital and the interests of the workers. . . . He came to the conclusion that the whole system was bound to collapse and that it was high time to experiment along new lines." Mrs. Bishop continues, "He explained to me that property as an absolute right was false; that we

would have to come to a better concept: the one of management for the good of all; and that the only guarantee of such a use was in collective ownership and control."

A manufacturer of shoe polish had asked his employees, "'Out with it. What is it you want? Wages and working conditions are good, yet you seem dissatisfied. What is it?'" The answer came pat: 'It's your business, not ours.' . . . The manufacturer then saw it clearly: 'One has to decide whether to stay on the side of the disease, or on the side of the remedy.' He decided for the remedy side, that is, work in association with his employees."

Another manufacturer who had converted his business expressed the same views: "Capitalism was good: it liberated man from serfdom. It does not meet the need of the workers of our age who feel, often dimly but unmistakably, that they are exploited."

These are but a few of many expressions of discontent by the class of men least expected to feel the necessity of the communitarian movement. They are increasingly common throughout the world of today.

The movement of the Communities of Work is not in any sense state socialism or communism. It includes men of all political, religious and economic beliefs, but it requires that they have a basic sincerity and honesty to bring to their common association. Independence and security are most natural as outgrowths of a group that is intimate. Units among the communities of work must be kept small, and if profits are high, instead of being used to grow larger they are used to foster the development and growth of new communities. Yet big undertakings can be managed by associated units. The rule of unanimity rather than majority-and-minority voting in the government of these communities seems to be part of a rather unusual pattern of sound community relationship. Experience dictates it, whether in the Irish parish council, the Russian *mir*, the board of directors of an American corporation, or the Society of Friends.

It is impossible to give a clear idea of these communities within a brief space. They vary so greatly among themselves, and they diverge so far from our common experience. However, a general impression, one gathers also from other observers, is summarized in a paragraph of Mrs. Bishop's earlier book, *France Alive*: "Very few people have had the privilege, in the modern world, of seeing genuinely free men. I have seen them in a French factory. It is an unforgettable experience to observe an entire group of human beings carrying themselves with dignity, assurance and freedom. It was a unique atmosphere brimful of hard work, initiative and joy."

Throughout Mrs. Bishop's study we find exemplified in practice basic principles of community that *Community Service News* has been reporting. Among them is emphasis on the idea that the community is an end in itself,

among other ends, an organism rather than an organization; that it is like a person. A few random quotations illustrate this: "In America distinct approval and admiration accompany the phrase 'he made good.' . . . *They* make good. That is the difference from the traditional statement. This is the modern pattern. . . . The thrill is not to make good singly, but collectively." "A community is a real person composed of all the buddies who are in it and of their wives and children."

The greater significance of community as compared with cooperation is repeatedly brought out. "In a community of work, accent is not on acquiring together but on working together for ■ collective and personal fulfillment."

The handicaps of the communitarian movement are recognized within the Entente Communautaire. Whereas the community can give the full values of community association to families of those who work at a particular business, their business itself may be terribly handicapped or destroyed by depression. The communities have not learned, what the German Free Economy movement learned before it was outlawed, that each participating community can give business to all others even though unemployment and inadequate market for goods has affected the rest of society. The French offshoot of this movement, shared by some communitarians and led by Fernand Pignatel, seeks to bring to French people awareness that the curse of the free economic society, its domination by finance and its suffering from recurrent booms and depressions, need not be displaced by a state socialism or communism, but can be conquered by intercommunity initiative as it was in some communities and regions of Germany and Austria.

The idyllic picture drawn by some communitarians, of a super-communitarian organization in which national and intercommunity economic affairs would be federally organized as in each local community, is theoretically pretty, but practically it falls prey to top-down manipulation and control. The bureaucracy of a complicated central economic administration cannot take the place of the open market without placing power beyond the bounds of intimate public oversight and personal association. In this area the Free Economy movement (reported in the March-April, 1949, *Community Service News*) that originated in Germany has much to offer the communitarian movement that originated in France.

—GRISCOM MORGAN

COMMUNITY ECONOMICS

HOW FIVE DOLLARS STARTED A REVOLUTION

By FRED C. KELLY

My friend Silas Cleophas Sprunger was a farm boy of Swiss parentage who grabbed an opportunity where the picking was slim. He found it in his home village of Kidron, Ohio, which had about fifteen houses and a population of less than one hundred. Few spots could have seemed less promising for the start of a career, and yet "Cy," as everyone calls him, felt that he ought to stay there. His family was of limited means and his father had died. After he finished one year and one semester at Bluffton College, he took over the job of raising and educating the younger children, which meant sticking close to the old home. It also meant that he must make more money. Just how, he wondered, could he make much in so small a place?

For a while he worked in the dairy barn at the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio, not far away, and sometimes he helped out at a livestock auction a group of local men occasionally conducted in Kidron. One day the auctioneer failed to show up and "Cy" asked for the job when he learned other regular auctioneers were too busy. Then he discovered that he had one or two unsuspected assets for that kind of job. One of these was an excellent voice. He could make himself heard over a big area and talk loudly hour after hour without growing hoarse. When some one told him he ought to become a regular auctioneer he listened. The Kidron auction was held so irregularly and was so unprofitable that the owners of the business wanted to sell. They asked "Cy" to buy them out. He laughed at the suggestion, for he had no money at all. They told him all they wanted was the amount of their actual money outlay. The barn where the sales were held was rented, and all they had ever invested was \$5 for lumber to build the auctioneer stand. If he would give them \$5 he could have the business. "Cy" managed to borrow the money and became the owner.

That was twenty-five years ago. I can't think of any other long-term \$5 investment that has shown a more vigorous growth. This year the total weekly sales at the Kidron auction amount to more than \$3,500,000, plus at least \$1,600,000 in private and registered livestock auctions. The auctions in one month amounted to \$521,341. "Cy" Sprunger receives from one to ten per cent commission, depending on the type of auction. Forty men on his staff draw good salaries. Besides a beautiful residential estate, he has land and barns and cattle pens, and an amphitheater where the sales are held, worth all together \$150,000. His money success, however, is perhaps the least important result from risking that first five spot. He has caused a revolution in farm livestock selling all over the United States. For the first ten years he just heaved along, barely making a living. Then a lot of people began to

discover that the Kidron sales served a real purpose; farmers thereabouts no longer had to ship their livestock to Cleveland, Pittsburgh, or Buffalo.

Kidron is in Wayne County, a rich agricultural area, and the livestock produced there is of such quality that instead of the farmers having to go a long distance to seek buyers, buyers began to come to Kidron. As the weekly sales became more and more successful they inspired other enterprising men to start similar auctions in other sections of Ohio. Now there are seventy such sales places in the state, not quite one to each of the eighty-eight counties. Sprunger, instead of fearing the others as rivals, helped to organize some of them. The idea spread beyond Ohio. Within the last sixteen years five thousand livestock auction places have been established all over the United States, and most of these are believed to stem, directly or indirectly, from the one at Kidron. A consequence of these sales has been ■ marked increase in the number of interior packing plants. Farmers are no longer dependent on a relatively small number of big packers. "Cy" Sprunger has caused ■ noteworthy revolution.

From all this one may well wonder how Sprunger did it. What did he *have*? Besides his excellent voice, he had a number of qualifications, among them instinctive good judgment, health, initiative, and personality. As is true of other kinds of salesmen, an auctioneer should have good health, for otherwise he would not look successful, and an appearance of well-being helps to carry conviction. Sprunger's personality is pleasing, too—large, regular features, suggestive of a British politician, and an easy smile. Most important of all, he has a brand of integrity that has continued to hold people's confidence. L. L. Rummell, dean of the College of Agriculture at Ohio State University, writes me that honest dealing has been ■ major factor in the success and influence of the Kidron sales. A while ago, state legislation was proposed for better inspection of livestock sales with regard to sanitary measures and control of disease such as hog cholera, and tuberculosis in cattle. Many who would be regulated opposed the legislation, and Sprunger had much to do with converting them to approval of clean auctions, sanitary grounds, and honest weights. His own inspection rating for sanitation is ninety-eight per cent.

About ten years ago "Cy" discontinued using posters for advertising sales, and now uses only newspaper and direct mail advertising. Many other auctions are now doing likewise.

After he had been auctioneering for six years and was considered good, Sprunger thought he still had much to learn and took a course at an auctioneering school at Decatur, Indiana. The next year he was invited to return there to lecture on certain phases of livestock selling and he has been doing so semiannually ever since.

Sprunger believes that to do an efficient job and an honest job he must be ■ student. He has studied sheep and hogs and cattle as one might study a book. I heard a buyer say, "The minute a cow puts its head through a door, 'Cy' can tell you all about it." Then I asked "Cy" how much he *could* tell from ■ quick glimpse. "The points I watch for," he said, "are the kind of head, condition of the hair, and the look in the eye. A bright eye denotes health, a glossy coat indicates a well finished animal, and the facial makeup helps me to estimate the approximate age."

Knowing cattle as he does, "Cy" has a quick sense of values and when the bidding has reached what he thinks an animal is worth, he raps his gavel and says *Sold!* It is just as wrong, he says, to oversell as to undersell. Things move rapidly at a Kidron auction. Though "Cy" sticks to the sing-song and lingo of an old-fashioned auctioneer, useful to let it be known that a sale is on, he does not take time to tell anecdotes or crack many jokes. He seems to know the name of everyone for miles around. In one sale I attended, totaling around \$100,000, he never once failed to call the buyer by name. A surprising feature of that sale to me was that not once did I hear a sound to indicate a bid. Since many of the buyers are professionals they do not always like one another to know who wants a certain animal, and "Cy" has worked out refinements for silent bidding—by a wink, a nod, or a motion of the finger. Sometimes a buyer who particularly wants to conceal his bids arranges in advance to use a certain sign—perhaps putting a pencil to either ear, a hand in his pocket, his cane over either shoulder, or by simply crossing his fingers.

One day a registered cow had sold for \$500. As it was being led out, with both buyer and seller satisfied, "Cy" happened to notice an error in the announced pedigree. He declared that the bidding must start all over again. If he finds any reason to suspect even ■ slight misrepresentation by the seller, no money is paid until he is sure.

After attending one or two Kidron sales one finds it not surprising that their influence has spread throughout the country and worked a revolution.

SMALL BUSINESS IN JAPAN

Notwithstanding the large amount of competently managed small business in America, there is a common feeling that big business is the ultimate type, and that successful small businesses are simply in the process of becoming a part of big business, or are in process of being eliminated. It seldom occurs to us that big business, as a type for nearly all industry, would be only one of several possible developments, each of which might be just as "natural and efficient." Japanese industry is an example of that fact. In an

article in the *American Sociological Review* for February, 1950, John C. Pelzel of Harvard University draws attention to the size of Japanese industrial units. With a (post-war) population of 2840 persons per square mile of cultivable land, or four and a half persons per acre, and with few raw materials, prewar Japan was nevertheless able to compete effectively with Europe and America in the markets of the world. Nor was quality necessarily inferior. Hanson Baldwin, military correspondent for the *New York Times*, in a recent article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, stated that in general Japanese war material was superior to that of the United States. The following is from Professor Pelzel's account:

"The best figures that I have been able to obtain for the postwar period show that as many as 84 per cent of all industrial establishments are plants employing five workers or fewer, and this is approximately the situation that obtained also before the war. . . .

"Even where the ownership and work group are no longer made up of a single family, a sense of traditional kinship and the habits of the rural village are very often kept alive in them. In spite of the rather formidable productive powers of Japanese industry, manufacturing is typically carried on in small or medium-sized plants. As late as 1937, when the country had already been converted to heavy industry, 90 per cent of all industrial establishments employed 100 workers or fewer, and 70 per cent of all industrial laborers were at work in these plants. . . .

"Mills have been dispersed throughout much of the countryside to take advantage of local farmer labor. Rapid transportation facilities are well developed throughout most of the small country and many farmers regularly migrate to the city factory during the slack season. A considerable part of the urban industrial labor force is made up of people who live at home on the farm at least part of the time but commute daily to city factories for work. These ties with the village are marked among laborers, but they are perhaps as typical of enterprisers as well. In recent decades, greater economic opportunity has allowed a multitude of small enterprisers to get a start, and they are drawn in considerable part from the farm, often remaining very nearly as closely bound to it, and to the ancestral family there, as their workers."

In one respect prewar small Japanese industry is not a type of what America should aim for. To a large degree it is dominated by big interests and was heavily exploited. Perhaps a better pattern is supplied by Finnish or Danish small industry, which to a considerable degree is coordinated and served by cooperative central service agencies, without domination or exploitation by powerful financial groups.

HOW SHALL COMMUNITIES BE SERVED?

Max Wolff, lecturer on community organization at New York University, as guest editor of the *Journal of Educational Sociology* recently reviewed the field of community organization. In conversation he expressed as follows a major impression he has of this field of work:

"We are developing a new science: democratization by manipulation. The devilishness of this 'science' is the attempt to permit and to encourage participation of people in the process by which they are manipulated." While this process may be newly orthodox as a "science," as an art it is as old as political and religious tyranny.

Significant examples and expressions of manipulation of democratic processes can not be discounted as not representative of professional educator and community organization trends. A manufacturer, author of a nationally known welfare program, privately expressed his view as follows: "With this program I can make my people think just what I want them to think." Such attitudes are not limited to the world of business. A key man in a national administration said to us, "Never let the people know what you are aiming at." An internationally known scholar, head of an important project, remarked, "It is well to make the people believe that they are sharing in the determination of this project." Such views may be extreme, but they are widely shared. For some devoted community workers say, "Doesn't community work necessarily involve manipulation, getting other people to do what you want them to do by indirect methods?"

The need in the community is great for experienced, competent help. How shall that help be safely provided? If the help is provided in terms of professional local community organizers, as some leading community theorists have suggested, manipulation is too generally the rule. A very competent educated woman who returned to her home community from a metropolitan career states the alternative procedure: "It is my belief that voluntary leadership, promoting harmony and constructive activity in the small community is the only fundamental method of combating the trend toward governmental centralization—which leads inevitably to fascism."

As an alternative to the professional local community organization worker such as envisaged by Jessie Bernard in her *American Community Behavior*, Max Wolff suggests in a mimeographed prospectus the superior role of the Office of Community Consultation to which requests for advice and help may come from communities, and to whose adult education work community members may come for education and training. Dr. Wolff describes how an office of community consultation would work—in manner similar to that of the Community Service Bureau at the University of Virginia, of the Community Development Program at the University of Okla-

homa, of the Community Service, University Extension Division at the University of Nebraska, of Community Service, Inc., and many others.

"The numerous case histories of cooperative community action must be collected and made available to communities and groups which face similar problems. There is still a wide field of research. An answer must be found to the question of how to keep as a continuing process the effectiveness of cooperative undertakings in inter-group and inter-people relations.

"An office of community consultation not dependent on any specific political, religious, social or ethnic group, should be available to everyone, every group and every community which wants to make use of its services. These services should be of special value to commercial and industrial firms which, interested in building up a local reputation, might be willing to sponsor community action geared to better conditions in the community.

"If connected with an institution of higher learning, the professional staff of the office can add to the general teaching program through courses preparing for community citizenship and through a teaching schedule for prospective community counselors. The staff can also add to the program for adult education, through courses on the community.

"The office should strictly limit its activity to consultation and should avoid participation in the projects themselves. Its services should be in furnishing advice on requests as to the method of initiating and carrying out a cooperative action project in the community, i.e., a self-survey, and how to guarantee the continued functioning of the accomplished organization in the community."

Real education, as distinguished from indoctrination and manipulation, is a slow process. The times seem to call for haste. Hence the widespread policy among community organizers, as among other social workers, to rely on social manipulation as a necessary way to get results. While initial high motives control, the results of manipulation may seem beneficial. However, it is world-wide human experience that authority tends to come into the hands of those whose self-interest has led them to seek it. Servants of state or church or other seat of authority are expected to promote the policies of those in authority. For example, Albert Lynd in the March *Atlantic* points out what many school board members are learning, that the local school board is expected by professionals to give "lamblike assent to their edicts."

Our school system is but one among many examples of how an immediately desirable policy may be established by manipulation, but at the cost of lessened capacity for responsible, discriminating action, and of permanent deterioration of the social structure. In the long run, as self-interest comes to control, if democracy is achieved by manipulation, it turns into dictatorship by manipulation.

RELIGION IN THE COMMUNITY

RELIGIOUS UNITY AND DIVERSITY

Many people are inquiring how the rival churches in their communities may unite toward a strengthening of the community and yet maintain the individuality of smaller sects. Some recent letters on the problem of competing church loyalties in the community give a vivid picture of what progressive church people are up against in community work. A minister writes from a community in which he is resident minister, and to which ministers of two other churches come from a distance:

"Work from a community standpoint is a little difficult. The churches are not making any progress and the little town of six hundred is in dissolution. I have always tried to do my work with the entire Community in mind, without any denominational bias, but seems I am about stumped in this town."

Another piece of correspondence on the rural church comes from the member of a rural congregation that had joined with others in a community church. She writes, "We must cater to the majority who are not [of our faith] . . . Should we perhaps have a separate group meeting on a week day for meditation and mutual help? . . . What can a handful of us do? We do not want to be disloyal, but our services (in the united community church) do not speak to our condition any more and I do not feel like attending."

These two letters express two major aspects of the problem of the church in the community. How shall we have at once unity and diversity in the worship of the community? In Tilford T. Swearingen's *Community and Christian Education* there is a suggestion of what might be a major part of the answer to this question: "We need a theology of the Community." That is to say, the community must be given a place in our religious understanding. At present Christian doctrines have no significant place for the community. The minister or members of a congregation may want to serve the community and recognize its importance, but the whole bent of the church is centered on individual salvation in the arms of the church. The historical dogma of the church had no place for different faiths working together with a loyalty to the community.

A rapidly increasing literature is developing on how the rural church shall work in its community. Some of it has been reviewed in *Community Service News*. An over-all impression from experience and from reading is that we are in greatest need of a thoroughgoing change in values and out-

look in which people in all walks of life will awaken to the community as a vital area of their own lives and an essential part of human civilization and of the Kingdom of God. The almost exclusive emphasis on individual salvation in the church is deep-seated. Insofar as individuals and ministers do change this orientation they are changing the foundations of the nation's culture. Such a change cannot take place quickly, and it is one of the most difficult and important of tasks. Those who undertake it should not be discouraged at the apparently small outcome of their efforts. They have a task like that of the mythical Thor in the hall of the giants, when he was given a goblet of wine to drink—with great effort he was able to lower the wine but an inch, but he later learned that in so doing he had lowered the level of the ocean itself.

Pooling Religious Resources. A description of an unusually promising and successful form of cooperation between churches is the topic of the December, 1949, New Dominion Series, "How Denominations Get Together for Better Church School." Many ministers know how terribly depressing the Sunday school is to both ministers and students. At Drakes Branch, Virginia, the best teaching and the best literature of each of three denominations were pooled with excellent results. A good superintendent was elected by the school each year with no thought of denominational rotation. Furthermore, the Methodists and Presbyterians have decided to hold their preaching services in the same building as the church school. "Yet," Jean and Jess Ogden point out, "neither denomination has lost its identity; their organizations are entirely separate, but they have learned to work together in harmony."

Variety in Unity. Nearly every upsurge of spiritual vitality begins in small groups, and religious organization should provide settings for such groups. Also the normal interest distribution in any community will range from the pioneer-minded, intellectual, reflective element at one extreme to the uncritically emotional or uncritically traditional at the other. Though they may be good neighbors, these different types are bored by each other's company. Each needs its own expression in its own language. Religious unity should retain opportunity for variety of conviction, outlook and expression through small groups. Variety in unity is a good principle for community religion.

Howard Kester has been appointed director of the Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, N. Car. He has recently been director of the displaced persons program of the Congregational Christian Service Committee.

POPULATION

HAS THERE BEEN A POPULATION REVOLUTION?

Peter F. Drucker, in a recent *Saturday Evening Post*, pictures a sudden revolution in American population habits. Some of his statements are sensational:

"Mix these ingredients—a larger number of women marry; they marry younger; children start coming sooner and they have more of them—and you have a population explosion. . . . Population experts have red faces. . . . Compared to the total debacle of the population expert, the famous flop of the public-opinion pollsters two years ago looks like a very minor mishap indeed. . . . The United States Bureau of the Census—the best known international authority for population studies—was 50% wrong all through the last ten years. As late as 1946 the census people predicted an increase of no more than 5,000,000 for the remaining years of the '40's; the actual increase in those four years has been between 10,000,000 and 12,000,000 people. . . . Our young mothers of the middle and late '40's are the babies of the middle and late '20's—the years when the birth rate had its sharpest decline. Fewer young women than ever before actually had more babies than ever before—a fact which actually contradicted every single thing the experts ever believed in. . . . The women who now reach marriageable age show a desire for a large family regardless of whether they are city folk, small-town folk or farm folk."

Such is the general tone of Drucker's article. Similar increases have taken place in most of Europe—in neutral countries like Sweden and Switzerland, in war-torn countries like Italy and Germany, in defeated and victorious countries—much to the perplexity of the experts.

In my flood control engineering practice I have noticed that whenever a very great flood occurs, facile magazine writers begin to tell about how the rainfall is increasing. Tracing available records back for a thousand years has not disclosed any such change. Such great floods seem to result from unusual combinations of circumstances such as may occur at long intervals with no general increase in rainfall. As might be expected, the greatest floods on streams with long records occurred before the supposed change of rainfall which was claimed to be the cause of recent floods. Similarly, the population flood of the nineteen-forties may have "demographic" causes which do not justify Drucker's sensational announcement.

We asked Dr. Warren Thompson, Director of the Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems, to give us his appraisal of the situation. The following are his comments:

"I did not see Drucker's article, but I am highly skeptical of such an analysis. Most of these people who are not familiar with demographic materials are disposed to philosophize too much regarding basic changes in reproduction. For example, the largest number of children ever born in the United States prior to 1941 was in 1921, and the number stayed relatively high for the next four years. Considering that a large proportion of marriages occur among women age 20 to 24 we would, in the normal course of things, expect a high marriage rate beginning about 1940 and lasting most of the decade, as did occur. Also we came up to 1940, due to the depression, with almost a year's deficiency of marriages. These were made up in the early 1940's. There appears to have been an additional increase due to marrying somewhat earlier during the boom times of the '40's, so that with these three exceptional factors taken together there was a tremendous increase in marriages during the first seven years of the 1940's.

"The marriages postponed during the 1930's being made up during the 1940's were of older people who were quite likely to want to proceed immediately to the raising of their families. As a result of the conditions described above, it was to be expected that the birth rate would be relatively high during the 1940's. It was higher, however, than I had anticipated because, even with my familiarity with the facts given above, I did not expect so many very early marriages as actually occurred, and I did not expect that there would be as much shortening in the interval between marriage and the first birth as seems to have occurred. But I would call your attention to the fact that the purely demographic conditions mentioned above cannot be repeated in the 1950's. The number of girls coming to 18 years of age in 1950 is probably 300,000 smaller than the number arriving at that age in 1940. In addition, in as far as marriages have been taking place at a younger age, the marriageable group today is even smaller than this figure would indicate because another 200,000 or 300,000, possibly more, have already been married. Consequently, the number of women that can have a first birth during the next few years is going to be considerably smaller than the number who could have had a first birth during the early 1940's. *Up to the present time the evidence is to the effect that nearly all the increase in the birth rate in recent years is due to the large number of first and second births.* The increase in third births is relatively small and beyond that point there is still a decrease. Consequently, my personal opinion is that we will probably see a very considerable decline in the birth rate in the next few years.

"I would make it clear that I certainly am not positive that there is no change in the attitude toward the size of the completed family desired. But I do not believe our data justify the assumption that there has been a funda-

mental change in this respect and that we can henceforward look for larger families. I should say, however, that I think we shall have to revise our estimates of future population upward quite a little in view of what has already happened."

The second world war, with its economic boom and other influences, was not anticipated by population experts, and it upset their forecasts in ways Dr. Thompson does not mention. In 1940 there were three American cities of 100,000 or more which had birth rates high enough to balance the death rates. They were Flint, Michigan, Salt Lake City, Utah, and El Paso, Texas. Flint, Michigan, had experienced a great influx of young families from the Southern mountain region, where the birth rate is about the highest in the world. Salt Lake City had an influx from the Mormon rural hinterland, where the birth rate was also very high; while El Paso, Texas, was being enlarged by the arrival of young Mexican families, who also brought with them the habit of large families. During the war a similar flood of these rural people entered many other cities. This is perhaps the chief reason why increase in birth rates has been in cities rather than in rural areas, which, population figures show, are becoming increasingly old folks' homes. A generation or two may pass before the newly arrived young families from rural areas change to small-size families characteristic of cities. There may not be taking place the change in population habits of cities which present census figures suggest.

Nevertheless, population habits have changed greatly in the past, and may change again.

—ARTHUR E. MORGAN

REVIEWS

Making Good Communities Better, by Irwin T. Sanders (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1950, \$2.00).

As the author says, this is a matter-of-fact book. It undertakes to suggest methods of community activities step by step, so that the average community worker, not widely experienced, can become quickly aware of the best sequence of necessary steps, and of the most promising way of taking them. It is a handbook of methods for social craftsmen, rather than a discussion of principles for social engineers. From this point of view it is orderly and quite thorough. It will bring to the community social worker's attention many steps or conditions which otherwise might not have occurred to him.

This method has been highly successful in practical American life. For instance, the National Cash Register Company, which in the last generation had probably more influence than any other American corporation on administration and merchandising practice, found its salesmen producing very

uneven results. The stories they told prospects were partial, variable and inconsistent. Thereupon, its president developed a well balanced and thorough-going sales talk, covering every important point in good proportion and without waste of time. Salesmen were required to learn this by heart. The result was a great increase in sales effectiveness. Repugnant as this method would be to imaginative and creative-minded persons, it was highly effective in the general run of cases. A large part of the successful practical activities of American life are conducted on that basis.

While the bulk of the book is made up of this matter-of-fact, detailed counsel, toward the end there are paragraphs drawing attention to the limitations of the method. Illustrating the kind of practical advice given in the matter of field surveys, we read:

"The workers on a project should draw up a long list of questions which have a bearing on the problem. This list should be passed around to business leaders, city and county officials, and others with community-wide experience, for appraisal. Such a step usually results in whittling down the list somewhat." To guard against misuse of a book made up largely of such practical suggestions, toward the end we read:

"Techniques in and of themselves are sterile, when used by the ignorant and ill-informed they may be dangerous; when used by the selfish and unscrupulous they may prove vicious."

On the question of manipulation we find similarly detailed suggestions, and later warnings about their use. For instance, we read:

"The approach which an action group can make to the community is to represent itself as the hero out to save the community (the heroine) from the wiles or shame of the villain (the problem which needs correction). Skillful orators have long used this device to win votes or support for a cause. They usually make some opponent a villain, but manage to cast themselves in the role of the hero. Posters, news releases, public addresses can carefully work in variations of the dramatic trio theme as a legitimate means of appeal. An illustration of the effective use of this trio is the recent cancer drive program."

In other passages manipulation is referred to as inferior to democratic methods.

The book is a sort of Roberts' Rules of Order for community undertakings. In the American mores of the last generation Roberts' Rules of Order was on a par with the national Constitution, and was perhaps more often looked to for authority. Nor was this always lost motion. It provided a known method of procedure for people who otherwise would not know how to begin to proceed. Natural informality survived in primitive neighborhood groups, in Quaker meetings, and with sophisticated men, as on boards of great corporations.

The danger of such a book as this is that it may be too successful, and as it becomes a Roberts' Rules of Order for community undertakings, people may feel that the various steps outlined must be taken. In probably two community projects out of three the persons involved have nearly all the significant information, and a formal community survey would be a waste of time and energy. Resources and participation may be unnecessarily absorbed. The project may drag out until the initial enthusiasm has died. One might paraphrase the words of Shakespeare's Brutus:

Communities have tides in their affairs
Which, taken at the flood, bring goodly fortune;
But, lost in surveys and analyses,
Ebb to disinterest and futility.

In short, one might wish that the author might have given greater emphasis to the values of naturalness. As it is, the book may accelerate the trend away from *gemeinschaft* and toward *gesellschaft* qualities in society—away from natural, spontaneous action and toward conscious formal procedures, even in minor undertakings. In taking that course the author is in the main stream of American social action.

Dr. Sanders has demonstrated his ability to shed academic terminology and to speak a language which community workers in general can understand. Because he speaks a human language, for every reader of a conventional book on the sociology of the community, his book may have five or ten. He is aware of the issue we mention. It would be fine if he should follow this book with one which would present the possibilities of informal "gemeinschaft" community methods. His difficulty comes partly from trying to provide one handbook for both large and small communities. Methods which may be imperative in metropolitan environment may be destructive of real community in primary groups, where the first requirement is that people treat each other as friends and neighbors, without strategy or manipulation.

—ARTHUR E. MORGAN

The foregoing review was sent to Irwin Sanders in time to obtain his views on it. His comments follow:

"I think it an excellent review which says what needs to be said and I have no changes to suggest. I agree with you, as you know, that the *gemeinschaft* values should be retained and even revived wherever possible and hope some day to work on that particular problem. I prepared the handbook under discussion because I saw so many people making a flop of community endeavors simply because they failed to observe what are really 'common-sense procedures.' I hope that a handbook of this sort can reduce the number

of such fatalities, since in our American system people are going to look for club projects and try to carry them out while failing to think at all of similar efforts being attempted all around them."

Small Town Renaissance: A Story of the Montana Study, by Richard Waverly Poston (New York, Harper, 1950, 231 pages, \$3.00).

Starting out exactly as would a pulp magazine western "thriller," this report evidently is an effort to carry the account of this project to Mr. and Mrs. Average Montanan. A natural price of such method of treatment is loss of status among scholarly sociologists. This course must have been taken deliberately in selecting a person to tell the story of the Montana study. Academic approval evidently was held to be less important than the chance of making it more possible for Montana readers to have a better appreciation of their possibilities, and a better chance to develop their communities into stable and desirable places to live.

The report in this respect is a true reflection of the study itself. Being an effort to combine sociological study with social evangelism, it may not have met the standards of sociological inquiry of its sponsors, but it has aroused and interested some of the people of Montana. The story is one of initial promise, of conflict, frustration and defeat, but with stirrings along the way of new hope and interest in some Montana communities, and with some possibilities that the project may be resurrected.

The book is a description of efforts to understand rural Montana and to help rural Montana to understand itself; and to find ways for making that understanding effective in local communities. One of the principal methods used was that of encouraging the organization of study groups in local communities, and of furnishing them with counsel and encouragement to become both study and action groups. The projects at Lone Pine and Darby were the pioneer efforts, followed by a dozen other communities.

Conflict was insured from the beginning. One of the then members of the staff was a popular journalist who had focused public attention on the influence in the state of a few great corporations. This staff member was perhaps the more vulnerable because, while his criticisms may have been qualitatively justified, his statistical information may have left something to be desired as to accuracy. Jealousy between the state's six institutions of higher education was sure to lead to depreciation of a new undertaking located at one of them.

So far as higher education is concerned, Montana might be described as a state which did not believe in itself. Perhaps half the graduates of these institutions, it is reported, leave the state. This reviewer recalls a meeting of the staff of an engineering school. The suggestion that it might be well

to explore possibilities for engineering graduates to find careers in Montana was almost indignantly countered by the statement that such a course was not necessary—these graduates, we were told, were so well educated that they could go East and get jobs with General Electric or Western Electric.

The idea that Montana should be a good place to live and work and raise a family needs to be transmitted, not only as an intellectual concept, but as a sustained emotional conviction. In attending one of the study group meetings at Darby the writer got the impression that to a considerable degree such a change of attitude was taking place there. A lumbering subsidiary of a large mining corporation had cut the available timber and moved away, leaving the prospect that Darby might become a ghost town. The way in which these people were attacking their problems, developing new ways of earning livelihoods, and finding ways of making life interesting, seemed hopeful.

The Montana Study reminds one somewhat of Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts just after the American Revolution. Born of resistance against the development of a cynical feudalism, it was messily conducted, and from a military standpoint was a complete failure. Ever since then proper historians have carefully or thoughtfully minimized and depreciated it. Yet the spirit it aroused was a considerable factor in turning the Massachusetts legislature, after the next election, from a feudal agency to a democratic legislative body.

It was largely as the result of that turnover that the approval of the new federal constitution by Massachusetts was made tacitly conditional upon the prompt adoption of the civil rights amendments to the constitution. Thus, this failure of a revolution in effect was one of the long-time determining influences in American government. Perhaps the Montana Study has started something which its untimely demise may not end.

While the book is written in a popular magazine, journalistic style, so far as the reviewer can judge from a limited acquaintance with the facts, it seems to be responsibly written. Many a tome in academic idiom carries a less well stated and less well balanced record than does this breezy account.

—ARTHUR E. MORGAN

Communities for Better Living: Citizen Achievement in Organization, Design and Development, by James Dahir (New York, Harper and Bros., 1950, 321 pages, \$4.00).

This is a collection of materials concerning community organization, housing, urban development, statewide economic and social undertakings, and new ideas in community development. It is the fruit of reading over a wide range of subjects, and as a guide in these fields is superior to most recent texts. The book begins with a discussion of community councils. Then follow brief discussions of a considerable number of large city housing

projects and movements for urban developments. Suburbs and satellite cities are similarly treated. Rural developments which are briefly described include Ohio Farm Bureau Advisory Councils, the Elk City, Oklahoma, Cooperative Hospital, the "Committee for Kentucky," and others. Short accounts are included of completed town planning projects, such as Kingsport, Tennessee, and Radburn, New Jersey. The latter part of the book is a discussion of new expressions of community interests. The bibliography ranges over a wide field of city and town planning and community development.

Rural Social Systems: A Textbook in Rural Sociology and Anthropology, by Charles P. Loomis and J. Allan Beegle (New York: Prentice-Hall, 873 pp., 1950, \$6.75).

Written in the form of a textbook in rural sociology, strongly flavored in the land-grant college tradition, and faithful to standards of social science disciplines, *Rural Social Systems* is an orderly cyclopedic presentation of the facts of rural life in America. An introductory chapter discusses the nature of social systems in general.

Agreeing that the family and the small community are the two universal social systems, the authors hold that the clique or friendship group is, next to the family, the most important social unit. We read, "In all societies, the group of greatest importance next to the family is the small clique, informal friendship or mutual-aid group. . . . Throughout the world, in village and isolated farming areas alike, locality groupings are not as important in personality formation and individual orientation as the smaller friendship groups."

The concepts of "gemeinschaft" (spontaneous, informal) social units and "gesellschaft" (conscious, premeditated) units are used throughout for classifying social systems. In seven parts the authors treat the family and informal groups as social systems, locality groups as social systems, and similarly social strata, religious groups, educational groups, political and occupational groups, and rural service agencies, as social systems. Cases and detailed illustrations give vividness to the factual summaries, and make of the book a sort of illustrated encyclopedia of rural sociology. A large amount of field and library research is represented. The book deserves to become a standard text and reference work.

Community Service News, issued bimonthly except July and August by Community Service, Inc., Yellow Springs, Ohio, \$1.50 per year, two years \$2.50. Griscom Morgan, editor.

Community Service, Inc., is an organization to promote the interests of the community as a basic social institution, concerned with the economic, recreational, educational, cultural and spiritual development of its members. Community Service was incorporated in 1940 as a non-profit organization to supply information and service for small communities and their leaders, in the belief that the decay of the American community constitutes a crisis which calls for steady and creative effort. The nation-wide interest expressed during the succeeding years has reinforced this opinion.

CONFERENCE COMMENTS

There is not room in this issue of *Community Service News* for summary of the Seventh Annual Conference on the Small Community. It will be briefly summarized in the forthcoming newsletter to Community Service members.

The comments from conference members about the conference were interesting for the great variety in reactions to it. Most people thought the program too crowded; some were sorry this conference lost the intimate community experience yielded by the smaller conferences in the past; some expressed regret that the conference management was at places so manifestly inadequate. Yet dominant was the feeling that the conference was a refreshing and vital experience. The following quotations from letters are fairly representative of the views expressed by many others.

I thought the conference was excellent. It certainly did wonders for me.

I cannot write too enthusiastically about the conference because I felt it was one of the best of the kind that I have ever attended. You seem to have a real knack for setting the stage for fruitful discussion.

Strong points: excellent variety of experts and common citizens. Weak points: not enough mental capacity to absorb all, nor enough energy to employ, or experiment with, all ideas and information.

I feel, as you do, that eighty people are too many for the development of a good group process. Yet I feel it is a great privilege to be able to come to the conference, and would dislike the idea of denying anyone who would want to come. Discussion among even that many people could very likely be made much smoother. . . . It is a very stimulating and wonderful experience.

At no time during the sessions did the whole group seem to have an awareness of applying themselves to the specific questions. There appeared to be no direct approach to the problem of making the group feel a togetherness and a oneness of purpose.

I was amazed at the training and experience represented in the personnel of the conference. It could have been much better utilized. . . . The conference justified itself, but in a somewhat haphazard way.

MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

September 3-7. Annual Meeting, Rural Sociological Society, Association Camp, Estes Park, Colorado. Joint meeting with American Sociological Society September 7 in Denver.

September 5-7. Annual Meeting, National Council on Family Relations, University of Denver, Denver, Colo.

September?-?. Conference of persons interested in cooperative communities—write Cooperative Community Builders, 95 Howard Ave., New Haven 11, Conn., for date and other information.

October 2-6. Annual Meeting, National Recreation Assn., Hotel Statler, Cleveland, O.